



EXHIBIT 5  
DATE 1/26/2011  
HB 83

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TO: Members of the House Human Services Committee  
From: Rita Charles, volunteer advocate for AARP  
Re: Support of HB 83

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for the record I am Rita Charles, an volunteer advocate for AARP, an organization with over 155,000 members in this state. AARP believes that patient care and safety is a top priority. HB 83 would ensure that patients who truly need medication receive it, while preventing abuse of the prescription drug system.

The Office of National Drug Policy states that prescription pain killers rank second as the nation's most prevalent abused drug. The Montana Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigation, stated that 42% of their cases in 2009 involved prescription drugs. Clearly, this is a large problem both nationally and in Montana. While teenagers have the highest percentage of abuse, all ages are at risk of unintended abuse. The elderly receive one third of all prescription drugs in the U.S., so monitoring medication would decrease the chances of adverse affects occurring. Forty-three states have already initiated a prescription drug registry. It is now time that Montana did as well. HB 83 will help doctors ensure that patients are receiving the correct prescription and provide the best treatment possible for Montanans.

By supporting HB 83 physicians can supply the necessary care to all of Montanan and ensure the safety of our citizens. The amount of prescription drug abuse is too high in Montana, with one third of Montanans saying they know someone with an abuse problem. With HB 83 we can reduce that number. We urge you to support HB 83.